

# A LETTER FROM CALIFORNIA.

GAUDALUPE, CAL., Sept. 15, 1878.

Harvest commenced here the first of June and has not ended yet. All of the grain that is worth cutting will be cut by the 20th of this month; but thousands of acres will not be cut on account of the rust. The barley crop is very good, and by the time the grain is cut it will all be threshed. Wages \$2 per day. A man can get all the work he can do at these figures. The man I harvested for lost seven hundred acres of wheat; he did not cut a straw. The rust was very bad.

Well, old boy, it seems to me I will have to come back to old Kentucky, and take you a riding with me before I can convince you that many strange and mysterious things may be seen if you would step out a few miles from the old nest where you were hatched. If you would come home with me I would show you beets that will weigh 100 pounds. I would show you pumpkins that no one man could lift from the ground. I will show you watermelons that will weigh 60 pounds. I will show you the largest pond of water you ever saw in all of your life (Pacific). Fish in it so large that one of them would make a mess for your whole family. One little minnow drifted ashore, near Sal's Landing, that measured nearly 100 feet in length. I can show you a tomato vine that is seven years old and has borne tomatoes every year. But I am afraid I could show you half of the many wonderful things that are to be seen in this far away valley, you, like many others, would begin to pine and pant for the scenes of your childhood.

Thousands of people come to this, and other new countries, become dissatisfied, they can't say what with, but simply want to go home. If any man is much stuck after home he had as well let California alone. If he wants style and fashion, he will not find it in this part of the State. You wanted to know how preaching would pay in California. As it has never been tried in this part of the State, I can not say; but I do know that it is plenty of material to work on. I am of the opinion that one of these old California miners would last you some time, and if you think of trying one of them you had better lay in a good supply of Old Bourbon or something in that line, for that is the only spirit you can reach them with.

It is a gradual descent from where I live to the beach; just enough for the river to flow into the ocean. When you are sailing down the river the ocean seems higher than the land. The thermometer stands at 60 the year round.

The farmers are beginning to prepare for rain. We may look for it any time after the middle of next month. We have none during the Summer or dry months. We have no use for any.

There are several farmers in our valley who have threshed sixty thousand bushels of grain. Corn don't do well. I have seen as many as twenty suckers on one stalk and on every sucker a shoot, and no corn after all. Tobacco will grow until it is out of all shape.

## Letter No. II.

DECATUR, ILL., Sept. 26, 1878.

We left Chicago Monday morning on the 8:30 train for St. Louis, per Illinois Central railroad, which starts from the depot on Lake street, running along the lake shore for a distance of six miles, giving a fine partial view of Lake Michigan, and also passing in full view of the "Douglass Monument," which presents a noble work of art. After passing the 8-mile post we seemed to be out of the city limits, and soon entered into what seemed a limitless prairie. Imagine streets laid off and houses thickly built extending from Holt's Bottom near to Hardinsburg, thence around by Taul's and the Tar Springs to the Ohio river at Fosse's, and you will have some idea of the size of Chicago. Steaming along at the rate of about 40 miles per hour—but making frequent stops—over a road perfectly straight for miles in succession, the country flat and rather marshy looking, with nothing especially interesting, if we except the large cornfields and numerous windmills, we reach Tullence, where we are switched off to another train, soon reaching Champagne where we have 25 minutes for dinner, and arrive at Decatur about 4 o'clock, where we stop off, holding on to one end of our through ticket to St. Louis.

Decatur is a city of some 12,000 to 13,000 inhabitants, with a number of good buildings—notably the public school buildings and churches—the business portion of the city tolerably compactly built, but the dwelling houses, including some beautiful residences, scattered over a large area of ground—each one seemingly wanting plenty of room for yard and garden. A number of manufacturing establishments are in operation here; prominent among them the "Hill Hog-Ring" manufactory which, in addition to making millions of hog rings annually, have now commenced making a simple but unique Tag, for fastening in the ears of cattle in place of the old way of cutting the ear or branding. Another late invention of the firm is a small wire pin, to be inserted in the top of fences—by a little instrument made for the purpose—to prevent breachy stock from breaking down or getting over the same. This appears to me to be an article of great utility, and is not expensive.

Here, too, are manufactured corn planters and also an attachment thereto, called "Check Rows," made nowhere else, it is said, by which corn is planted in check perfectly straight each way, and is cultivated both ways. One man with a pair of horses can plant 18 acres per day.

A large quantity of flour is manufactured here. There is also a Bagging Factory, Furniture Factory, Rolling Mill, Wood Pump Factory, and other machinery for working up timber. Notwithstanding this is mostly a prairie country with comparatively little timber, a Bagging Factory has recently been started, making split baskets by hand on a large scale, and shipping to St. Louis for a market, using white oak of greatly inferior quality to ours. What an opening at Cloverport for manufacturing enterprises! What quantities of fine timber we have that might be converted into materials and implements of utility, giving steady employment to scores of people and proving a constant source of revenue and wealth to our town and county.

This has been the best year in this

section, in the last eight or ten. Wheat yielded 20 to 25 bushels per acre on an average. Oats a very large yield, and corn will be 50 to 75 cents. Prices for wheat very fair, say 80 to 85 cents. Oats are only worth 14 cents, and new corn is being contracted for at 20 cents per bushel.

Yesterday we had a severe storm which unroofed a school building, in which were about 300 children, literally covering two rows of seats with brick and debris, and yet not seriously injuring a single child. P.

## Letter from Hancock County.

HOME, Oct. 3, 1878.

To the Breckenridge News: Well, friend David, upon reflection I concluded I would drop you a line, this is in part because you once lived among us and partly because I learned of late that you were the advocate through the News of a better financial civilization than has been promulgated in this country as a universal system, though in time gone by, the same doctrine has been taught by the eminently great Jefferson and occasionally since by one here and there, but this great principle has been smothered beneath the heel of those who preferred the government to charter Banks of issue and circulate 3, 5 or 10 dollars in a paper "promise to pay" to the bearer on demand, etc., on a basis of one dollar in specie, that is to say, confidence fellows. If it were not for one thing this would look strange and strange indeed. That every five or seven years the country must pass through a panic and then more new Banks, confidence and then no confidence, warranting, insolvency, forgery and every species of devilry that stimulates the young lawyer and adds to the grasping Shillock and the old lawyer. Some lawyers and perhaps all of them that have heard me talk of them for the last 35 years think I despise a lawyer; not so, personally. If I had been bred to the law I suppose I would have been about like the average. I do not hate the lawyer, I hate his infernal ways. This is not as it should be. These, of all other classes, should make the laws and they, the lawyers, must understand State and Federal constitutions, administer the laws, etc.

I should not dare to expect you to publish this except if true, and if a lie it won't hurt anybody but your humble clodhopper correspondent, who has passed through several money panics. Now I must tell you the pet of my life since the smash of the State Bank in 1837 and 1839. The distress of the wide country when every school-house, every Saturday was court-house, trying warrants, as under our old constitution. They would warrant one week and try the next. I then was thoroughly satisfied that the execution laws ought to be repealed except in a few cases as to infants' estates, administrators, etc. But in the first part of this article I said if it was not for one thing, etc. I now state that in our early life we heard our great Divines and small fry discoursing day in and day out upon the tributes of the Great Ruler of the Universe, the word of God, etc. Now in the first place the word of God, like the money of this or any country, ought to be true. Now I say this teaching is a continual contradiction and not compatible with our senses, consequently we learn from early to late to adhere and follow things incompatible with a high order of civilization and right. Our duty, they say, is to do so and so, believe so and so, and they reason with us to convince us that we must lay down the five senses, to understand the invisible. Why do they want us to reason at all? If reason at all then reason clear through. Well, in time gone by none of this was allowed in church or State. Gallileo was denied this great privilege. There is many a "cuss" in this Union now who would halter up every devil of us commoners if he or they dared, for this simple exercise of the right of thinking a little too audibly for their especial and elegant selves. But the world moves. The debt we owe God they say ought to be paid. I dare say if any of us owes this Great Providence a cent, it will never be paid. We owe it to ourselves to do right and to do unto others as we would have them do to us, we owe this to our children unborn. And governments hold their subjects in vassalage to the privileged few upon the same hypothesis. Our fathers thought they changed this old harness and established "we the people," but lo! our ignorance in running after those high "cockatums"—hence the election of Tilden and the seating of Hayes, hence the exemption from punishment for fraud in high places and the imprisonment of a poor illiterate devil for stealing a sheep. Lawyers, O lawyers! nearly 300 in Congress, some 90 in the Senate. This is the result of being educated to advocate any side of a case for money. Money, money! I can't work in mud, rain, sunshine, frost and snow, can't do it. No negro slaves now, principle is "played out." I tell you, sir, 25 or 40 negroes was a powerful stimulus to patriotism and legislation for the benefit of labor, hence nullification in South Carolina and Secession in the Southern States, and poor but proud Kentucky would have done likewise if Magellan had not owned an empire of fine lands in Iowa and Illinois. However, money still makes the mare go. This is not intended as a laborious minute argument. It needs none from my standpoint, others see differently, no doubt. Yours, GEO. SMITH.

Lewisport, Ky.

A dreadful tornado passed over Issabella county, Michigan, entirely destroying one or two villages.

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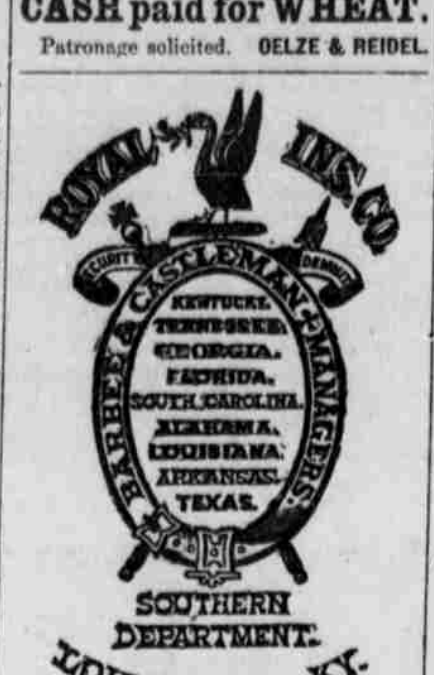
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Sept 18 4m

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July 1st, 1878. no 11 4t

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